IN THE CLAIMS

Please **AMEND** claim 33 as indicated below. A complete listing and status of the claims follows.

What is claimed is:

1. (Original) A system for converging networks, comprising at least one resource manager (RM) transparently introduced in a signaling path between a SS7 network node and a signaling transfer point (STP) which receives signaling messages, determines whether a bearer connection can be established over a packet network based on routing information extracted from bearer-related signaling messages, coordinates the bearer establishment for the bearer connection over the packet network, and passes on the signaling messages.

2. (Original) The system of claim 1, further comprising a routing data-base for determining whether a bearer connection can be established over a packet network, routing the connection over the packet network, and establishing the bearer path.

3. (Original) The system of claim 1, further comprising a media gateway (MG) between the packet network and the network node under control of the at least one RM.

4. (Original) The system of claim 3, wherein the MG assists in estab-lishing the bearer path under control of the at least one RM.

5. (Original) The system of claim 3, further comprising another network node, wherein the MG provides controls to establish the bearer path between the network node and the another network node.

6. (Original) The system of claim 5, wherein the another network node is one of a soft switch and a time division multiplexing switch (TDM).

7. (Original) The system of claim 5, wherein the another network node is a soft switch and the at least one RM converts Integrated Services Digital Network User Part (ISUP) messages to bearer independent call control (BICC) messages and converts BICC messages to ISUP messages.

8. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the at least one RM coordinates processing of time division multiplexing (TDM) connections and packet connections to establish the bearer path.

9. (Original) The system of claim 8, wherein the at least one RM establishes, monitors and releases, in any combination, the bearer path.

10. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the at least one RM is at least two RMs establishing a bearer path over the packet network between the network node and another network node.

11. (Original) The system of claim 10, wherein the two RMs coordinate processing of time division multiplexing (TDM) connections and packet connections to establish and release the bearer path.

12. (Original) The system of claim 10, further comprising at least two media gateways (MGs) corresponding to the at least two RMs, the at least two

MGs interfacing with the network node and the another network node, respectively, and the packet network.

13. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the at least one RM determines whether the routing information corresponds to a predetermined packet route.

14. (Original) The system of claim 1, further comprising a database which is dynamically created and the routing information is reconciled to a corresponding packet route as calls are originated and processed.

15. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the routing information is one of a directory number and a carrier access code (CAC).

16. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the at least one RM is a plurality of self learning switches (SLSs).

17. (Original) The system of claim 16, wherein a first SLS of the plurality of SLSs provides an identity (ID) Tag to an ISUP message and further propagates the ISUP message and ID Tag over the network.

18. (Original) The system of claim 17, wherein the first SLS propagates the ISUP message and ID Tag to a second SLS which then provides another unique ID Tag to the ISUP message and sends a tag seen message including an ID of the second SLS to the first SLS.

19. (Original) The system of claim 18, wherein the tag seen message is sent over at least any one of a packet network, a SS7 network, and a wireless network.

20. (Original) The system of claim 18, wherein the second SLS further propagates the ISUP message with the another unique ID Tag over the network, wherein if another SLS of the plurality of SLSs responds to the ISUP message then the another unique ID Tag is replaced with a new unique ID Tag of the another SLS and propagated over the network and sends another tag seen message to the one of the plurality of SLSs identifying the another SLS.

21. (Original) The system of claim 18, wherein the first SLS builds a routing entry in a routing database to define one or more routes to at least one of the plurality of SLSs when a final tag seen message is received by the first SLS.

22. (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein the routing entry includes at least any one of an Internet Protocol (IP) address, a directory number, a carrier access code, an SLS address, a name of the B—party, and a network node identifier.

23. (Original) A method for converging networks, comprising the steps of:

transparently introducing at least one resource manager (RM) in a signaling path between a SS7 network node and a signaling transfer point (STP);

receiving signaling messages at the resource manager;

determining whether a bearer connection can be established over a packet network based on routing information extracted from bearer—related signaling messages;

coordinating the bearer establishment for the bearer connection over the packet network; and

passing on the signaling messages.

24. (Original) The method of claim 23, further comprising the steps of:

monitoring the routing information associated with a call from the network node; and

routing the call and establishing a bearer path over the packet network when an entry in a routing database corresponds to the routing information.

25. (Original) The method of claim 23, further comprising establishing the bearer path between the packet network and the network node with the RM instructing at least one media gateway to assist in establishing the bearer path.

26. (Original) The method of claim 25, further comprising establishing the bearer path between the network node and another network node.

27. (Original) The method of claim 26, further comprising the steps of:

converting at least one Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) User Part (ISUP) message to at least one bearer independent call control (BICC) message; and

converting the at least one BICC message to the at least one ISUP message.

28. (Original) The method of claim 23, wherein the establishing step includes coordinating processing of time division multiplexing (TDM) connections and packet connections to create and release the bearer path.

29. (Original) The method of claim 23, further comprising determining whether the routing information corresponds to a predetermined packet route and the routing information includes one of a directory number and a carrier access code.

30. (Original) The method of claim 23, further comprising the steps of:

adding a Tag to an ISUP message which identifies a creator of the Tag;

propagating the ISUP message with the Tag across the network;

sending a Tag seen message which identifies a sender of the Tag seen message over the packet network; and

propagating the ISUP message including the identity of the sender of the Tag seen message across the network.

31. (Original) The method of claim 30, further comprising creating at least one routing entry in a routing database when a last Tag seen message is received, the entry defining a route including at least any one of an Internet Protocol address (IP) address, a network node identifier, a RM address, a B-party name, and a media gateway address.

32. (Original) The method of claim 30, further comprising the step of:

adding a counter to the ISUP message to track the sequence of the Tag seen message; and

incrementing the counter when a Tag seen message is sent.

33. (Presently amended) A computer readable media having executable instructions for causing a processor to perform a method, comprising:

transparently introducing at least one resource manager (RM) in a signaling path between a SS7 network node and a signaling transfer point (STP);

receiving signaling messages at the resource manager;

determining whether a bearer connection can be established over a packet network based on routing information extracted from bearer—related signaling messages;

coordinating the bearer establishment for the bearer connection over the packet network; and

passing on the signaling messages. ~~program product comprising a computer usable medium having readable program code embodied in the medium for implementing the method according to any of claims 23 to 32.~~